

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to the Office Action dated Nov 14, 2008 wherein claims 1- 7 and 9 - 22 were rejected. By this paper, claims 1, 15, 20 and 22 have been amended. Claims 1-7 and 9-22 remain pending in this application. In view of the following remarks, Applicant requests further examination and reconsideration of the present patent application.

35 USC 102

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1-2, 5-6, 9, 13, 15, and 20-22 under 35 USC §102(b), as being anticipated by International publication WO 02/02460 to Deckman.

Applicant respectfully submits that International publication WO 02/02460 to Deckman does not disclose each and every element as recited in independent claims 1, 15, 20, 22. Specifically, the reference fails to disclose "a combustor in fluid isolation with respect to said reformer."

Deckman neither suggests nor discloses a combustor in fluid isolation with respect to a reformer and there is no suggestion or disclosure within Deckman to have a combustor in fluid isolation with respect to reformer.

Deckman uses a membrane to exchange Hydrogen from the reformer to the combustor; hence the combustor and the reformer are in fluid communication and exchange mass. Whereas, the applicant's invention by virtue of having combustor and reformer in fluid isolation will not allow for mass transfer between the reformer and the combustor. The newly amended claims sets out the structural differences between this application and Deckman by having the reformer in fluid isolation with the combustor.

Therefore, Deckman does not disclose every element of claims 1, 15, 20 and 22 and does not anticipate it under 35 USC 102b. Claims 2, 5, 6, 9, 13, 20 and 21 depend directly or indirectly from claims 1, 15, 20 and/or 22. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 USC 102.

35 USC §103

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 3-4, 7, 10-11 and 16-19 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Deckman in view of US Patent 4,622,275 to Noguchi et al. Applicant respectfully submits that the applied references do not teach, suggest,

or disclose either individually or in combination the claims 3-4, 7, 10-11 and 16-19.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claim 12 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Deckman in view of US Patent 4,622,275 to US Patent Application Publication 2004/0031388 A1 to Hsu. Applicant respectfully submits that the applied references do not teach, suggest, or disclose either individually or in combination the claim 12.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 14 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Deckman in view of US Patent 5,938,800 to Verill. Applicant respectfully submits that the applied references do not teach, suggest, or disclose either individually or in combination the claim 14.

Rejections over Deckman in view of Noguchi et al

The deficiencies of the Deckman reference have been discussed in detail above. The secondary reference Noguchi et al., generally discuss a fuel cell power plant. Neither reference teaches or suggests a combustor in fluid isolation with respect to a reformer. Noguchi et al. fail to overcome the deficiencies of the Deckman reference. Accordingly, these references either alone or in hypothetical combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the present invention as claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 15.

Accordingly Applicant submits that the combination of the cited references would not render the subject matter of claims 1 and 15, or claims 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18 and 19 that depend therefrom, obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 USC 103.

Rejections over Deckman in view of Hsu

The deficiencies of the Deckman reference have been discussed in detail above. The secondary reference Hsu, generally discuss a zero/low emission and coproduction energy supply station. Neither reference teaches or suggests a combustor in fluid isolation with respect to a reformer. Hsu fails to overcome the deficiencies of the Deckman reference. Accordingly, these references either alone or in hypothetical combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the present invention as claimed in amended independent claim 1.

Accordingly Applicant submits that the combination of the cited references would not render the subject matter of claims 1, or claim 12 that depends therefrom, obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection

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under 35 USC 103.

Rejections over Deckman in view of Verill

The deficiencies of the Deckman reference have been discussed in detail above. The secondary reference Verill, generally discusses a compact multi fuel steam reformer. Neither reference teaches or suggests combustor in fluid isolation with respect to a reformer. Hsu fails to overcome the deficiencies of the Deckman reference. Accordingly, these references either alone or in hypothetical combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the present invention as claimed in amended independent claim 1.

Accordingly Applicant submits that the combination of the cited references would not render the subject matter of claims 1, or claim 14 that depends therefrom, obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 USC 103.

Summary

For the reasons set out above, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application are, therefore, respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is kindly asked to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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February 16th, 2009